

## **MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** January 1, 2017

**To:** Natasha Baker, State School Reform/Redesign Officer  
State School Reform/Redesign Office

**From:** Gary Jensen, Chief Executive Officer  
East Detroit Public School Group

**Subject:** Quarterly Report to the State School Reform/Redesign Officer

### **Overview**

Pursuant with Section 2.2 of the [Agreement for Chief Executive Officer Services](#) signed on June 16, 2016, I am required to file quarterly reports with the State School Reform/Redesign Office (SRO), beginning on October 1, 2016 and every three months thereafter. Each report shall include a summary of the actions, progress and data collected and analyzed from the preceding three months. In this, the second quarterly report for the 2015-2016 school year, the information and data that has been collected and analyzed is from October 1, 2016 – December 31, 2016.

### **Legal/Historical Background**

On June 16, 2016, The State School Reform/Redesign Officer issued a notice to the Director and Chief Information Officer of the Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget confirming the February 2, 2016 determination that better educational results would be achieved at several public schools in the East Detroit Public School District (EDPS) if a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) were appointed to take control of the identified schools. Subsequently, an Agreement for Chief Executive Services was executed between the State School Reform/Redesign Officer, the Director and Chief Information Office of the Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget and myself on June 16, 2016.

The statutory authority to execute such an agreement is vested in the State School Reform/Redesign Officer under [Section 1280c\(7\) of the Revised School Code, 1976 PA 451, MCL 380.1280c\(7\)](#), which states:

*(7) If the state school reform/redesign officer determines that better educational results are likely to be achieved by appointing a chief executive officer to take control of multiple public schools, the state school reform/redesign officer may make a recommendation to the superintendent of public instruction for appointment of a chief executive officer to take control over those multiple schools. If the superintendent of public instruction appoints a chief executive officer to take control of multiple public schools under this subsection, the chief executive officer shall impose for those public schools implementation of 1 of the 4 school intervention models described in subsection (2) and impose an addendum to each applicable collective bargaining agreement in effect for those public schools as necessary to implement the school intervention model and that meets the requirements of subsection (8). With respect to those public schools, the chief executive officer has all of the same powers and duties that the state school reform/redesign officer has for public schools placed in the state school reform/redesign school district under subsection (6). The chief executive officer shall regularly submit monitoring reports to the state school reform/redesign officer on the implementation and results of the intervention model in the form and manner, and according to a schedule, as determined by the state school*

*reform/redesign officer. The chief executive officer shall exercise any other powers or duties over the public schools as may be directed by the superintendent of public instruction.*

The following narrative has been developed to provide the required report on the implementation and results of the intervention model(s) imposed at the identified schools.

### **Schools and Intervention Models**

Effective June 16, 2016, in the Agreement for Chief Executive Services the State School Reform/Redesign Officer placed the following East Detroit Public Schools under my authority as the CEO:

- Bellview Elementary School
- Pleasantview Elementary School
- Kelly Middle School
- East Detroit High School

As defined in Section 1280c(7) of the Revised School Code, 1976 PA 451, MCL 380.1280c(7), the CEO shall impose for those public schools implementation of 1 of the 4 school intervention models that are provided for the lowest achieving schools under the federal incentive grant program created under sections 14005 and 14006 of title XIV of the American recovery and reinvestment act of 2009, Public Law 111-5, known as the "race to the top" grant program. These models are the turnaround model, restart model, school closure, and transformation model. I have chosen to initially adopt the previously approved Reform Plans submitted by the schools listed above and approved by the State School Reform/Redesign Office. I have reviewed these plans and have not found them substantially deficient in nature, but need to verify that the plans are being utilized in the identified buildings as stated. Rather than exercising my authority to impose a different plan, I have chosen to monitor the implementation of the previously approved plans. Links to each of the plans can be found in the table below:

**TABLE 1: Reform Plans and Intervention Models**

<b>School Building Name</b>	<b>Reform Plan Intervention Model</b>
Bellview Elementary School	<a href="#">Transformation Model</a>
Pleasantview Elementary School	<a href="#">Transformation Model</a>
Kelly Middle School	<a href="#">Transformation Model</a>
East Detroit High School	<a href="#">Transformation Model</a>

### **Preliminary Planning**

The powers, duties, and authorities vested in the CEO are defined in both Section 1280c(7) of the Revised School Code, 1976 PA 451, MCL 380.1280c(7) and in the Agreement for Chief Executive Services. They include, but are not limited to:

- a) Managing the day-to-day operations of the Priority Schools.
- b) Developing and implementing financially stable budgets for the Priority Schools.
- c) Assuming administrative authority and responsibility for the assignment, reassignment, and evaluation of all personnel.
- d) Submitting monitoring reports to the SRO officer on the student academic results in the form and manner, and according to a schedule, as determined by the SRO officer.

- e) Providing instructional leadership.
- f) Communicating and collaborating with internal and external stakeholders.
- g) Submitting a revised reform plan to the SRO for approval, which includes academic goals and a plan to transition the Priority Schools back to School District operations.
- h) Carrying out all rights and responsibilities that may be specified in an Intervention Agreement executed between the SRO and the School District.

Subsequent to the execution of the Agreement for Chief Executive Services, and following a detailed review of publicly available performance, financial, and organizational data, I created a 90-Day Entry Plan detailing the action steps and defining the goals and objectives that I had set for the first quarter of my contract. This plan was included in my Quarter 1 report and can be made available again upon request.

Unfortunately, less than one month after the State School Reform/Redesign Officer's announcement of my appointment as the CEO over the four East Detroit Public Schools listed above, East Detroit Public Schools initiated legal action that to date has prevented me from entering any of the schools under my appointed authority. Case # 2016-002335-AW, which is currently being heard by Judge Joseph Toia in the Macomb County Circuit Court, placed a Temporary Restraining Order on me July 5, 2016 preventing me from entering any of the East Detroit Public Schools.

This interference has continued despite a court order issued by Judge Toia on July 28, 2016 that granted me immediate access to the four Priority Schools placed under my authority while the pending litigation before the Michigan Court of Claims, Case No. 16-000123 is being resolved.

Despite this, and despite my continued efforts to work collaboratively with Superintendent McLeod, as dictated by Judge Toia's Order, East Detroit Public Schools, and their legal counsel, have continued to bar me from regularly accessing the classroom of the Priority Schools under my authority. This situation has been litigated two additional times, first on October 31, 2016, and then again on December 19, 2016. These meetings led to a revised order that allowed for me to be in classrooms up to three times per day at Kelly Middle School and two times per day at East Detroit High School, Bellview Elementary and Pleasantview Elementary.

These classroom visits will begin on January 9, 2017, two full months after being allowed into the school buildings. As students begin school on January 4, 2017, they will have approximately 60 days to make final preparations for the state assessment in April. Kelly Middle School is working on some very thin ideals that they must overcome in order to have trend data continue upward for the 2016-2017 school year.

### **Goal Setting**

Even though, EDPS administration and their legal counsel did everything in their perceived power to keep me out of any classrooms throughout the four Priority buildings. That has not prohibited me from gaining knowledge about the buildings from the hallway and common areas I was able to observe. These observations, combined with a thoughtful analysis of past proficiency rates for each subject in each school, allowed me to set both academic and affective goals for each of the four EDPS CEO Priority schools. Each of the goals listed below is to be achieved by the end of the 2016-2017 school year.

### **Bellview Elementary**

- Student Attendance Goals for 2016-2017
  - Bellview Elementary will demonstrate an attendance rate of 92% by reducing the number of chronically absent students by 10%.
- Student Behavior Goals for 2016-2017
  - Bellview Elementary School will demonstrate an overall 10% decrease in out of school suspensions compared to the 2015-2016 school year. (Number TBD)
- Personnel Management Goals for 2016-2017
  - Bellview Elementary will work to retain 90% of staff that begins teaching second semester of the school year 2016-2017.
- Academic Goals for 2016-2017
  - Bellview Elementary will demonstrate a proficiency rate of 13 % on science standard by 7/1/17 as measured by the M-Step state assessment.
  - Bellview Elementary will demonstrate a proficiency rate of 16 % on social studies standard by 7/1/17 as measured by the M-Step state assessment.
  - Bellview Elementary will demonstrate a proficiency rate of 40% on math standard by 7/1/17 as measured by the M-Step state assessment.
  - Bellview Elementary will demonstrate a proficiency rate of 47% on ELA standard by 7/1/17 as measured by the M-Step state assessment.

### **Pleasantview Elementary**

- Student Attendance Goals for 2016-2017
  - Pleasantview Elementary will demonstrate an attendance rate of 92% by reducing the number of chronically absent students by 10%.
- Student Behavior Goals for 2016-2017
  - Pleasantview Elementary will demonstrate an overall 10% decrease in out of school suspensions compared to the 2015-2016 school year. (Number TBD)
- Personnel Management Goals for 2016-2017
  - Pleasantview Elementary will work to retain 90% of staff that begins teaching second semester of the school year 2016-2017.
- Academic Goals for 2016-2017
  - Pleasantview Elementary will demonstrate a proficiency rate of 13% on science standards by 7/1/17 as measured by the M-Step state assessment.
  - Pleasantview Elementary will demonstrate a proficiency rate of 16% on social studies standards by 7/1/17 as measured by the M-Step state assessment.
  - Pleasantview Elementary will demonstrate a proficiency rate of 40% on math standards by 7/1/17 as measured by the M-Step state assessment.
  - Pleasantview Elementary will demonstrate a proficiency rate of 47% on ELA standards by 7/1/17 as measured by the M-Step state assessment.

### **Kelly Middle School**

- Student Attendance Goals for 2016-2017
  - Kelly Middle School will demonstrate an attendance rate of 92% by reducing the number of chronically absent students by 10%.
- Student Behavior Goals for 2016-2017
  - Kelly Middle School will demonstrate an overall 10% decrease in out of school suspensions compared to the 2015-2016 school year. (Number TBD)
- Personnel Management Goals for 2016-2017
  - Kelly Middle School will work to retain 90% of staff that begins teaching second semester of the school year 2016-2017.
- Academic Goals for 2016-2017
  - Kelly Middle School will demonstrate a proficiency rate of 22% on Science standards by 7/1/17 as measured by the M-Step state assessment.
  - Kelly Middle School will demonstrate a proficiency rate of 27% on Social Studies standards by 7/1/17 as measured by the M-Step state assessment.
  - Kelly Middle School will demonstrate a proficiency rate of 32% on Math standards by 7/1/17 as measured by the M-Step state assessment.
  - Kelly Middle School will demonstrate a proficiency rate of 46% on ELA standards by 7/1/17 as measured by the M-Step state assessment.

### **East Detroit High School**

- Student Attendance Goals for 2016-2017
  - EDHS will demonstrate an attendance rate of 92% by reducing the number of chronically absent students by 10%.
- Student Behavior Goals for 2016-2017
  - EDHS will demonstrate an overall 10% decrease in out of school suspensions compared to the 2015-2016 school year. (Number TBD)
- College and Career Readiness Goals for 2016-2017
  - East Detroit High School, working in tandem with the MICAN associate in the school will host a fall college fair as well as completing 6 college campus field trips to Michigan campuses throughout the 2016-2017 school year.
  - East Detroit High School, working in tandem with the MICAN associate in the school will host a FAFSA evening for all students and parents.
  - East Detroit High School, working in tandem with MICAN associate in the school will complete at least 1 college application for each Senior.
- Graduation Goals for 2016-2017
  - East Detroit High School will achieve a graduation rate of 81% for the 2016-2017 school year.
- Personnel Management Goals for 2016-2017
  - East Detroit High School will work to retain 90% of staff that begins teaching second semester of the school year 2016-2017.

- Academic Goals for 2016-2017
  - East Detroit High School will demonstrate a score proficiency rate of 59 % EBRW SAT assessment by 7/1/17 as measured by this state assessment. Average score for the SAT EBRW will be demonstrated by EDHS students at or above 502.
  - East Detroit High School will demonstrate a score proficiency rate of 36% Math SAT assessment by 7/1/2017 as measured by this state assessment. Average score for the SAT Math will be demonstrated by EDHS students at or above 492.
  - East Detroit High School will demonstrate an overall SAT score of 995 by 7/1/2017 as measured by the state assessment for SAT

### **Teaching and Learning**

As stated above, although I have not been afforded the opportunity to witness the actual teaching and learning of students in the classrooms, I have been able to acquire a knowledge based on the climate and culture of the buildings. As these aspects of the school culture, will in turn impact student achievement in the buildings, I have included below an overview of my initial conclusions related to the status of teaching and learning at each of the 4 EDPS CEO Priority Schools. Beginning in January, I will be spending time in the classrooms where teaching and learning is taking place and work to obtain a deeper understanding of the processes in the classrooms at East Detroit Public Schools.

#### **Bellview Elementary School:**

Principal, Mr. Anthony Sedick, is in control of this building and students are engaged in teaching and learning every time I am in the building. I have been in this building several times over a two-month period and from all indications, in his third school year at this building, Mr. Sedick has his teachers working with students in a positive manner. I have had some quick conversations with Mr. Sedick and some of the observations made from those conversations lead me to believe they are making continued impact on student achievement.

- Discussions about Mr. Sedick finishing up his round of staff observations prior to going on winter break and he is referring to those discussions with staff as opportunities to help his staff grow as educators.
- Reviewing a PLC document on one of the tables in the hallway discussing the PLC meeting from the day prior and how to move forward from the meeting. This was very calculated and mapped out for staff to help students, as well as, themselves when working with students.
- Most staff members are welcoming and introducing themselves, as well as students appearing to really enjoy being here at Bellview.
- Many processes for students seem to be in place, such as how students get breakfast and go to their rooms and how students walk in the hallways with arms folded and lips zipped.
- I was able to sit outside Mr. Turner's MACC classroom for a morning session and that classroom is top notch from what I could tell, look forward to seeing this in action personally.
- Have witnessed the reading coaches from the ISD in this building, have not been able to see what they are doing with coaching for staff, but am if it is around the reading comprehension strategy they have shared with me, ACRI. I want to have some students work with the EBLI program in the future and am working with the team there to possibly have this happen.

- Mr. Sedick stated to me that he has been able to keep most of his staff in this building, which again I believe speaks to the leader and how people want to be involved with positive, influential leaders.

#### **Pleasantview Elementary School:**

Principal, Mrs. Lauri Hillebrand, is in her first year of administration in this building. Lauri took over this building during the summer from the former Principal, Mrs. Hobbs, who went to Kelly Middle School. I have been in this building several times over a two-month period and from many indications, the building is moving in a positive trend. I know from experience that taking over in a building that you were formerly a staff member can create some tension, but I have not seen this so far at Pleasantview. Mrs. Hillebrand is generally moving about the building when I am in the building. I have not had many conversations with Mrs. Hillebrand around student achievement, as I believe she is working to keep herself in a positive position as a first-year principal.

- Very welcoming environment and each staff member that came across me was very cordial and welcoming, as well as all the students.
- Have witnessed the reading coaches from the ISD in this building, have not been able to see what they are doing with coaching for staff, but am if it is around the reading comprehension strategy they have shared with me, ACRI. I want to have some students work with the EBLI program in the future and am working with the team there to possibly have this happen.

#### **Kelly Middle School:**

Principal, Fran Hobbs and Assistant Principal, Renita Williams, are taking this building over together this year for the first time as a team. I am not sure how long Renita Williams has been in this building, but Fran Hobbs is in her first year at Kelly Middle School. Fran Hobbs came over from Pleasantview Elementary.

- Overall, teaching and learning seem to be a stretch for all involved.
- School culture speaks to isolation. Many of the classroom doors are perpetually closed and there is little evidence of collaboration.
- Substitute teachers are playing a role in core curriculum delivery. This makes it very difficult to secure regular expectations for students.
- Many staff seem to be in a survival mode while teaching and learning with students. I see many staff members shutting their doors to the outside upon the ringing of the tardy bell.
- Making observations from outside the classrooms, there appear to be an overabundance of microphones being utilized in MS classrooms. I would suggest that in order to help with the rambunctious actions of students, these microphones get a much needed rest in the classrooms.
- Resources in the classrooms may be an issue for a number of classrooms in the district, but I continually see “photo copied” worksheets in the hands of students. I am concerned that this is a worksheet community.
- Students in transition times have not been taught what is acceptable behavior:
  - Students in this building do not walk on the right and left sides of the hallway.
  - There is a bell that rings in between classes that is set at 3 minutes, I believe it is very hard to reach classes in this multi-level building, but it seems to be just a suggestion for students as I don’t see the end result of being late to class.

- A group of students are continually not in classrooms on time.
- Transition times are very difficult for this building, there should be conversation about how to change this up for second semester, possibly moving grades individually without bells.
- PBIS is supposed to be utilized in this building, but is being implemented with minimal effectiveness. “Gold slips (PBIS Rewards)” can frequently be found on the hallway floors. This is a clear indication that students don’t find the reward valuable.
- Have witnessed the AP utilizing a mobile office on the second floor of the building, this is something that needs to be done more as to be with the students and teachers on a consistent basis.
- Kelly MS would benefit from, intensive, side-by-side, ISD coaching support.
- After my brief time in the classroom at Kelly MS, the following day, I actually witnessed teachers trying to gain control of unruly classrooms by bringing them back out in the hallway and teaching them how to enter a classroom correctly. This needs to be taught and learned as I see many teachers spending the first five to ten minutes trying to gain control of the classroom.
- I am curious to learn more about the Advanced Learning Program at Kelly MS, how are those students stacking up on state assessments and want to know what the demographics of that program are versus the population at Kelly MS.
- Kelly MS is where I will be spending the majority of my time over the next month to try and gauge as much as possible about the teaching and learning that is in the classrooms.

#### **East Detroit High School:**

Principal Mr. Greg Roberts is in his first full-year at EDHS, after being called upon as an interim for the finish of the 2015-2016 school year. Mr. Roberts is accompanied in his daily activities by three Assistant Principals, Stephanie Fleming, Andy Kastl and AD/AP John Rizzo, who all have a different amount of experience as administrators. I have witnessed a conversation when Mr. Roberts has been speaking to an AP about the process and learning it takes to move up as a Principal, which is good for the growth of his administrative team and the future of the building. The work of growing the capacity inside of the building is imperative and will be paramount to keep the positive things happening at EDHS should Mr. Roberts transition elsewhere.

- I was able to witness a countywide college access fair in East Detroit that was very well done, and was headed by the counseling staff/MiCAN staff. In witnessing this event, I was able to see all of the hard work come together for this team.
- Mr. Roberts has built many meaningful relationships with students and you can tell by the candid conversations that he has with his students. Witnessed him discuss many different things with his students and the conversations that he had were not all based around academics.
- Staff is doing a book study with Mr. Roberts, the Eric Jensen book in dealing with relationships.
- Witnessed the MiCAN group having a FAFSA afternoon with about 7 students and parents.



### **Conclusion and Next Steps**

Over the next 90 days, I will begin observing classroom instruction at Bellview Elementary School, Pleasantview Elementary School, Kelly Middle School, and East Detroit High School. This will allow me to develop a first-hand understanding of the academic structures, strengths, weaknesses present in the four schools that have been placed under my authority. This knowledge will then help me to ensure student learning and academic progress is occurring every day at Bellview Elementary School, Pleasantview Elementary School, Kelly Middle School, and East Detroit High School.

The 90-Day Entry Plan that was originally included with my Quarter 1 report has been updated as of December 31, 2016, to show the current status of the goals and objectives included therein. Progress toward completing the 90-day plan has been dramatically impacted by the restrictions put on me by the legal proceedings currently underway and described above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Jensen", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gary Jensen, CEO  
East Detroit Public School Group

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